and distribution of foodgrains to the poor in a transparent and accurate manner. Actual issue of foodgrains at especially subsidised price for the Below Poverty Line (BPL) population will be made as and when a State has identified the BPL population and made satisfactory arrangements for issue of foodgrains to them.

Abnormal rise in Prices of items of Daily Need

126. SHRI O.P. KOHLI: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Varshik samiksha: Sarkar ne gehoon, chana or aaloo ke daam badne ki baat maani" which appeared in the Dainik Jagran dated 25th December, 1996;

(b) if so, the facts thereof; and

(c) the reasons for the Government to have not been able to control the abnormal rise in prices of items of daily need?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV): (a) and (b) The news item in the 'Dainik Jagaran' on 25.12.1996 was based on the Press Note issued by the Government on 24.12.1996. The Press Note gives details regarding the av..ilability and prices of wheat and other essential commodities alongwith steps taken by Government to control the prices.

(c) The Government has taken a number of steps to control the prices of essential commodities. In order to meet the shortage of wheat, action has been taken to import wheat up to 2 million tonnes through STC. Apart from certain long term measures to increase the production of essential commodities, imports of commodities which are in short supply are encouraged to augment the availability of these items. Some, of the commodities are also supplied through the Public Distribution System and Cooperative Stores on below market prices. Stringent actions are being taken against hoarders and blackmarketeers and others indulging in unfair trade practices under the Essential Commodities Act and Prevention of Blackmarketing and Maintanance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act etc. by the State/UT Governments.

Allotment of Palmolein Oil to Punjab

127. SHRI MOHINDAR SINGH KALYAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the total quantum of Palmolein Oil allotted to the State of Punjab during the last two years;

(b) whether Government propose to increase the quantum of Palmolein during the year 1997-98; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV): (a) No damand for supply of imported palmolein for the PDS has been received from the State of Punjab during the last two years.

(b) and (c) The Government of Punjab has indicated nil requirement of palmolein for 1997-98.